UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR 22 2007

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Office of Environmental Information's CY 2007 – FY 2008 Environmental Justice Action Plans

FROM: Molly A. O'Neill, Assistant Administrator and Chief Information Officer
                 Office of Environmental Information *Molly A O'Neill*

TO: Granta Nakayama, Assistant Administrator
                 Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

As requested in Nicolas Targ's November 2, 2006, request to EPA's Environmental Justice Coordinators, please find enclosed the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Environmental Justice Action Plan for CY 2007- FY 2008. It builds on the progress OEI made during FY 2006 in developing electronic tools to support the Agency's environmental justice priorities. We are proud of the results we have been able to achieve in carrying out our environmental justice program.

We are planning to accomplish more during CY 2007-FY 2008. I am delighted to advise you that our Action Plan includes a large number of activities supporting OEI's long-term goal of integrating environmental justice principles into our business practices. Given OEI's role in the Agency as the National Program Manager for information, our activities focus on ensuring that OEI products and services address the information and analytical needs of Agency managers and staff working with environmental justice communities. We are committed to the principles of environmental justice and support the Agency's goal of integrating environmental justice into all EPA programs, policies, and activities.

If you have any questions, or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at 202-564-6665 or Lorena Cedeño-Zambrano, OEI Environmental Justice Coordinator, at 202-566-0978.

Attachment

cc: Barry Hill
       OEI Board of Directors
       Ruth Alene Soward

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION
CY 2007 - FY 2008 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ACTION PLAN

Narrative

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The Office of Environmental Information (OEI) supports the Agency's mission to protect public health and the environment by integrating quality environmental information to make it useful for informing decisions, improving management, documenting performance, and measuring success. OEI — working with our many different internal and external stakeholders and partners — establishes and oversees information-related policies and procedures that reflect the concerns of EPA managers and staff; local, state, and federal government; tribes; the regulated community; interest groups; and the general public. OEI's mission is cross-cutting in nature. That is, it supports virtually all of the Agency's programs through enterprise-wide efforts to manage the life cycle of information to support EPA's mission of protection human health and the Environment. OEI identifies and implements innovative information technology and information management solutions that strengthen EPA's ability to achieve its goals. OEI ensures the quality of EPA's information, and the efficiency and reliability of EPA's technology, data collection and exchange efforts, and access services.

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Organizational Infrastructure and Management Support:

Given OEI's role in the Agency as the National Program Manager for information, OEI's environmental justice (EJ) policy is to ensure that OEI products and services address the information and analytical needs of the EJ components of Agency programs. The OEI EJ Coordinator is organizationally located in the Chief Information Officer's (CIO) Immediate Office, specifically in the Policy and Program Development Staff (P2DS) within the Office of Planning, Resources, and Outreach. This organizational placement allows the EJ Coordinator to coordinate from the CIO's Immediate Office with each of the OEI line offices to promote the integration of EJ within all program areas. For the CY 2007 - FY 2008 EJ Action Plan, each OEI Office Director was required to submit at least one action item to promote this integration. During CY 2007 - FY 2008, each Office Director will report to the CIO and EJ Coordinator on their progress and performance in implementing these action items.

Operational Resources/Program Support:

The EJ Coordinator responsibilities are collateral duties for one employee within P2DS. Approximately 0.35 of a full-time equivalent (FTE) is devoted to serve in this role. The day-to-day responsibilities would include working with Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) to provide EJ training to OEI staff and managers, tracking and reporting on CY 2007 - FY 2008 EJ Action Plan items, and participating in monthly EJ conference calls and other meetings.

In preparing the CY 2007 - FY 2008 EJ Action Plan, OEI identified actions which are integral to our mission, functions, and programs. Therefore, completion of the actions will be accomplished as part of our day-to-day program implementation and management, and separate mechanisms — such as teams and workgroups — will not be needed.

Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Alignment:

In EPA's 2006-2011 Strategic Plan (Plan), information is a cross-goal strategy:

> ### *EPA's Cross-Cutting Environmental Information Strategy*
>
> Information systems ensure that we and our federal, state, tribal, and local agency partners have the accurate, timely information we need to make sound decisions. To make environmental information readily accessible, we have created a computer network that connects EPA and our contractors with states and tribes, standardized our computer systems, implemented data standards, and instituted a variety of streamlining efforts.

The Plan states that EPA will continue to identify information technology and information management challenges and to address them as effectively and cost efficiently as possible. During the next five years, EPA's cross-cutting information strategy will focus on 4 major areas:

1. **Analytical Capacity:** We will continue to convert raw environmental data into information that decision makers can use more easily. For example, our geospatial work is converting millions of pieces of data into maps;
2. **Governance:** We will ensure that the data EPA collects are of appropriate quality and design, that the data will serve many users, and that we minimize system overlaps to avoid conflict and reduce costs;
3. **Excellence in Information Service Delivery:** EPA will use the latest technology to streamline management and data processes and link data partners, making information more accessible to all; and
4. **Innovation in Information Management:** Through electronic government (E-Gov) efforts, we will continue to convert paper-based administrative or regulatory processes into electronic systems, improving transparency and accessibility, and reducing paper waste.

As an example of how OEI's EJ work links to the Strategic Plan in CY 2007 - FY2008, OEI plans to hold an Exchange Network Tribal User's Meeting to foster a greater understanding of information management and the need for timely and quality information. OEJ and OEI will work to improve the Environmental Justice Geographic Assessment Tool's population estimation mythology instrument through the inclusion of residential land cover data from the National Land Cover Database (NLCD).

In addition, in CY 2007 - FY 2008, OEI will be working in partnership with Region 8 to coordinate information projects with Allied Tribal Colleges in Montana (a partnership of four Tribal Colleges), Colorado State University of Pueblo and Metropolitan State College of Denver (two Hispanic Serving Institutions). These projects involve providing information about mercury to Native Americans and Hispanic communities in a culturally appropriate fashion. This effort relates to making health and environmental information more accessible as part of OEI's excellence in information service delivery.

INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

OEI has established mechanisms to communicate and coordinate internally on EJ issues. As noted earlier, to promote the integration of EJ within all OEI program areas, each OEI Office Director was required to submit at least one action item for the CY 2007 - FY 2008 EJ Action Plan. During CY 2007 - FY 2008, each Office Director will report to the CIO and EJ Coordinator on their progress and performance in implementing these action items. In addition, OEI has been working with OECA to provide EJ training to OEI. OEI is training 22 staff and managers that have been identified in an effort to further integrate EJ principles into our programs, systems, and practices.

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

OEI has a number of processes and mechanisms in place to share information, and receive input and feedback from external stakeholders, including EJ communities. Since its creation in 1999, OEI has held, and will continue to hold, national conferences and stakeholder meetings which include panels, listening sessions, and speakers interested in collaborating with OEI on a wide variety of programs, issues, and concerns.

OEI serves as the Agency focal point for improving access to environmental information for external and internal users. OEI develops and provides access to powerful sets of analytical tools to empower EPA and the American public to make informed decisions about protecting human health and the environment. In addition, OEI provides the necessary technology infrastructure to support EPA's public and internal Web sites. As a part of this service, OEI is responsible for the organization, search services, and navigational aids to ensure that customers are able to find and use the Agency's immense holdings of information. OEI provides access to links to databases that the public can use to learn more about environmental conditions in their community or to comment on proposed regulations that could affect their community, such as:

- Envirofacts: The web site provides electronic access to multi-media data and information resources to several EPA databases with information about environmental activities that may affect air, water, and land anywhere in the United States. With Envirofacts, the public can learn more about these environmental activities or generate maps of environmental information.

- Regulations.gov: Regulations.gov is the U.S. Government Web site that makes it easier for citizens and stakeholders to participate in Federal rulemaking - an essential part of the American democratic process.

- Toxics Release Inventory (TRI): The TRI program annually collects TRI data and makes it accessible to the public through various products and the Internet. TRI contains information on releases and other waste management activities of nearly 650 toxic chemicals and chemical categories.

- Facility Registry System (FRS): This central database links and integrates all place-oriented records to allow for more complete public access, comprehensive data integration, and accurate mapping of the facilities regulated by EPA.

- Geospatial Analytical Tools: OEI develops and provides access to powerful sets of web-based geospatial analytical tools to help decision-makers and citizens answer common questions, examine critical problems, and discover potential solutions for environmental protection and human health issues.

  - Window to My Environment (WME): is a mapping application that provides interactive maps and tools to answer popular questions about environmental conditions affecting air, land and water in a user's community. Users can search by demographics, bodies of water, or population density. WME also provides hotlinks to state or federal information of the areas searched.
  - TRI Site Locator Tool: The tool combines interactive maps and aerial photography to help TRI reports obtain accurate latitude and longitude coordinates of their facility. Locations can be found with the address or the facility name.
  - EnviroMapper for Envirofacts: is a mapping application that provides access to several EPA databases to provide users with information about environmental activities that may affect air, water, and land anywhere in the United States. EnviroMapper for Envirofacts provides users with the ability to map various types of environmental information from the Envirofacts databases, including air releases, drinking water, toxic releases, hazardous wastes, water discharge permits, and Superfund sites for areas of interest.

The EPA web site also provides resources for citizens concerned about an environmental situation within their communities and looking for information on where to go for answers and assistance. These resources include links to information from other Agency offices on how to report a potential environmental violation or suspicious situation, and learn about programs, opportunities, and tools to get involved and make a difference in a community. A number of these resources are available in Spanish.

DATA COLLECTION, MANAGEMENT, AND EVALUATION

Demographic data is used to determine whether proposed actions are likely to have disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on low-income populations, minority populations, or Indian tribes. EPA makes available to the American public demographic data from the Bureau of the Census. OEI does not have its own EJ data sets, but does manage the System of Registries (SoR). The SoR provides a gateway and search capability to several registries and repositories residing in OEI. These registries comprise a critical link in

EPA's information architecture and are a vital component to the Environmental Information Exchange Network (Exchange Network). The registries provide identification information for objects of interest to EPA and Exchange Network trading partners, which includes states and tribal entities, the regulated community, and the public. These objects consist of data elements, Extensible Markup Language (XML) tags, data standards, substances (chemicals, biological organisms, and physical properties), terms, facilities, regulations, and data sets that the Agency uses in its core business processes. The SoR includes the:

- Information Quality Guidelines (IQGs): EPA's Information Quality Guidelines create a mechanism that enables the public to seek and obtain, where appropriate, correction of information disseminated by the EPA.

- Environmental Data Registry (EDR): EDR is a comprehensive, authoritative reference for information about the definition, source, and uses of environmental data. The EDR supports the creation and implementation of data standards that are designed to promote the efficient sharing of environmental information among EPA, states, tribes, and other information trading partners. The EDR also catalogs data elements in application systems. The EDR does not contain environmental data; it provides descriptive information to make the data more meaningful.

- Substance Registry System (SRS): SRS serves as the nucleus for linking information about substances regulated by the EPA. The SRS includes queries for substances (such as chemicals, organisms, and physical characteristics) in EPA regulations, data systems, and other information resources.

- Terminology Reference System (TRS): TRS provides a single resource of environmental terminology for the EPA by compiling collections of terms from the Agency and other sources. TRS contains collections of environmental terms and definitions from a variety of sources including Agency program offices, information systems, and state collections. TRS includes queries for terms and definitions by keyword, information resource, and organization.

- FRS: As noted earlier, FRS is a centrally managed database that identifies facilities, sites, or places subject to environmental regulations or of environmental interest. This site is the companion to the FRS integrated searches in Envirofacts, as a single point of access to select U.S. EPA environmental data. Envirofacts provides access to several EPA databases to provide you with information about environmental activities that may affect air, water, and land anywhere in the United States.

- Registry for EPA Applications and Databases (READ): READ is an authoritative source of information about EPA application systems and other information resources. The READ search page includes queries for Agency application system, organization, and other information resource metadata.

- XML Registry: This registry provides the capability to share information about XML data exchange templates, Namespaces, XML schemas, definitional terms such as "namespaces," and other supporting files needed to map data flows between Exchange Network partners.

- Environmental Information Management System (EIMS): EIMS contains descriptive information (metadata) on scientific data sets, including remote sensing data, Geographical Information System (GIS) coverages, databases, documents, models, and multimedia. EIMS also provides a repository for scientific documentation that can be easily accessed with standard Web browsers to place a virtual library on the desktop of EPA staff and others with Internet access. EIMS allows query by Information Type, Subject / Keyword, Cross Partner Collection, or EIMS Partner.

- Web Registery (WR): WR is a centrally managed database used to collect metadata for EPA's priority web materials. EPA's search engine combines this metadata with the full text of corresponding pages and documents, in order to produce more relevant search results. This metadata is also used to dynamically generate document and web page collections, such as the Browse EPA Topics web areas.

OEI is the Agency's focal point for quality and information collecting, managing, providing, and safeguarding environmental information. OEI works in collaboration with our partners and customers to develop and implement innovative EPA collection policies to ensure that information is more efficiently and accurately colleted. OEI enables the Agency to protect human health and the environment through informed decisions and actions.

PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In CY 2007 - FY 2008, OEI will work with OECA to train 22 staff and managers that currently work in OEI's EJ program in an effort to provide training to targeted personnel and further integrate EJ principles into our programs, systems, and practices. This training effort builds on previous accomplishment completed in FY 2003.

EJ ASSESSMENT

OEI, as a support organization in the Agency, will not conduct EJ assessments in CY 2007 - FY 2008. However, OEI will continue to support those offices which do conduct EJ assessments by providing tools and technical support, as requested.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

OEI's CY 2007 - FY 2008 Action Plan includes activities from all OEI Offices. OEI has identified outputs and outcomes for all planned EJ activities, which are described in the following Matrix of Activities. Accomplishments and results from our EJ program will be highlighted in:

- the CIO's annual accomplishment report;
- mid-year corrections to the EJ Action Plan, which will be due in September 2007;

OEI CY 2007 – FY 2008 Narrative

- OEI's 2008 Environmental Justice Action Plan Progress Report;

- CIO Updates – an electronic newsletter issued to EPA managers, staff, and stakeholders; and

- OEI national conferences and meetings, and other appropriate settings.

Cross Cutting Strategies:

Objective: Internal Capacity Building (e.g., internal program management)

Activities	Output	Applicable Outcome Measure[1]			Point of Contact
		Short-term (awareness)	**Intermediate** (behavior)	**Long-term** (condition)	
EPA developed the "Quality System Training and Guidance Customer Satisfaction Survey" whose audience included State, Local, and Tribal Governments. The survey was available from January 17-26, 2007.	This survey will establish a benchmark for future assessments of customer satisfaction and allow the Quality Staff to improve training and guidance to meet stakeholder needs.	Quality Staff can use the stakeholder feedback to build on and improve training and guidance.	The audience realizes that Quality Staff seeks its contributions and therefore, the audience is more willing to contribute ideas and participate in the future.	The audience's comments and feedback become a part of our training and guidance, which make these tools more accessible to a wider group of stakeholders.	Name: Kim Orr Office: Quality Staff Telephone: 202-564-3908 Email: orr.kimberlie@epa.gov

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[1] All three outcomes may not apply for every activity.

Activities	Output	Applicable Outcome Measure[1]			Point of Contact
		Short-term (awareness)	**Intermediate** (behavior)	**Long-term** (condition)	
On all (i.e., 100%) quality assessments where EJ-related roles and activities are addressed in the organization's QMP, OEI will continue to include a question about implementation of policies addressing EJ concerns.	OEI can determine whether organizations are following up on EJ concerns documented in their QMPs and, as a result, into their quality-related work.	EJ activities are recognized in the QMP. EJ activities are brought to the forefront of quality assessments.	EJ activities are brought to the forefront of Quality assessments. Number of EJ Quality assessments are increased.	Quality of EJ program is improved.	Name: Kim Orr Office: Quality Staff Telephone: 202-564-3908 Email: orr.kimberlie@epa.gov
Develop and design Quality Program curriculum and exercises. Provide technical assistance for stakeholders attendees. Facilitate training sessions.	Provide quality training materials. Stakeholders complete Quality Program training. Quality technical assistance is delivered. Stakeholders are given the opportunity to submit papers and speak at training conference.	Knowledge of Quality is increased/ improved. Stakeholders are equipped with skills to develop Quality programs. Stakeholders equipped with skills to develop Quality program presentations of their group/ organization.	Quality principals are used by stakeholders in the work environmental. Stakeholder's quality skills are used in related activities (group/organiza-tions). Stakeholders deliver Quality training/presentations.	Customers use EPA Quality program resources to improve their group's/organization's programs.	Name: Kim Orr Office: Quality Staff Telephone: 202-564-3908 Email: orr.kimberlie@epa.gov

Activities	Output	Applicable Outcome Measure[1]			Point of Contact
		Short-term (awareness)	**Intermediate** (behavior)	**Long-term** (condition)	
Quality Staff continues to hold its Annual training event at different locations throughout the country.	Stakeholders do not have to travel repeatedly to the Washington DC area to attend these events; consideration is given to those who do not have the resources for long distance travel.	More stakeholders who have not had opportunities in the past can attend training sessions.	Number of stakeholders developing quality skills is increased.	Quality program knowledge is developed and improved.	Name: Kim Orr Office: Quality Staff Telephone: 202-564-6830 Email: orr.kimberlie@epa.gov
Include activities in the Exchange Network (EN) Grant Solicitation that support information management capacity building for tribes.	Awarding EN grants to tribes that enable them to build their information management capacity.	At least 5 tribes are expected to establish EN Nodes by the end of CY 2007	Five tribes submit data via the EN.	Five tribes are able to share data over the EN to improve environmental decision-making.	Name: Janice C. Bryant Office: Communications and Outreach, Information Exchange Partnership Branch Telephone: 202-566-2956 Email: bryant.janice@epa.gov
Support the internal capacity building of Tribes.	An EN Tribal Users' Meeting.	Tribes develop a greater understanding of information management and the need for timely, quality information.	Increase use of EN by Tribes.	Achieving greater tribal participation in the EN and its governance.	Name: Janice C. Bryant Office: Communications and Outreach, Information Exchange Partnership Branch Telephone: 202-566-2956 Email: bryant.janice@epa.gov

Activities	Output	Applicable Outcome Measure[1]			Point of Contact
		Short-term (awareness)	**Intermediate** (behavior)	**Long-term** (condition)	
Support the development of a strategy for increasing tribal participation in the EN.	Convening a group of tribal leaders to prepare the strategy.	Greater understanding of information management and how the EN can be used.	Strategy on tribal participation in the EN.	Increased tribal participation on the EN.	Name: Janice C. Bryant Office: Communications and Outreach, Information Exchange Partnership Branch Telephone: 202-566-2956 Email: bryant.janice@epa.gov
In cooperation with the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ), OEI will continue to develop the Environmental Justice Geographic Assessment Tool.	During FY07-08, OEI will improve the Environmental Justice Geographic Assessment Tool's population estimation methodology through the inclusion of residential land cover classes from the National Land Cover Database (NLCD).	Costumer's ability to access data is increased. Knowledge of NLCD data is increased.	NLCD data use in EJ assessments is increased.	Quality of the Geographic Assessment Tool is improved.	Name: Dave Wolf Office: OIAA Telephone: 202-566-0690 Email: worf.dave@epa.gov

Activities	Output	Applicable Outcome Measure[1]			Point of Contact
		Short-term (awareness)	**Intermediate** (behavior)	**Long-term** (condition)	
Provide the hosting, computing and network infrastructure required for the existing and enhanced EJ Geographic Assessment Tool. Provide guidance to development activities of EJ tools and applications. Evaluate and implement new infrastructure hardware and software in support of the hosting of EJ related applications to ensure their efficiency.	An efficient and secure infrastructure is available for the EJ Geographic Assessment Tool.	EPA and/or the public have the means to electronically access the EJ Geographic Assessment Tool.	Customers use the EJ Geographic Assessment Tool.	Quality of EJ Geographic Assessment Tool is improved.	Name: Robin Gonzalez Office: OTOP - RTP Telephone: 919-541-4470 Email: gonzalez.robin@epa.gov

Activities	Output	Applicable Outcome Measure[1]			Point of Contact
		Short-term (awareness)	Intermediate (behavior)	Long-term (condition)	
Provide the hosting, computing and network infrastructure required for the existing and enhanced Tribal Information Management System (TIMS). Evaluate and implement new infrastructure hardware and software in support of the hosting of EJ related information to ensure their efficiency	An efficient and secure infrastructure is available for TIMS.	EPA and/or the public have the means to electronically access TIMS.	Customers use TIMS.	Quality of TIMS is improved.	Name: Robin Gonzalez Office: OTOP - RTP Telephone: 919-541-4470 Email: gonzalez.robin@epa.gov
Coordinate a training effort in OEI to build capacity of Tribal knowledge among staff who work to carry out OEI's and EPA's mission in Indian Country.	Staff completes training in Tribal awareness to build internal knowledge of program.	Staff is better able to interact, understand, and support the Agency's responsibility to Tribes.	Tribal knowledge is increased.	Tribal Program services are improved.	Name: Lorena Romero-Cedeño Office: OPRO Telephone: 202-566-0978 email: cedeno-zambrano.lorena@epa.gov

Activities	Output	Applicable Outcome Measure[1]			Point of Contact
		Short-term (awareness)	**Intermediate** (behavior)	**Long-term** (condition)	
Coordinate an EJ training effort in OEI to build capacity of EJ knowledge among staff who work to carry EPA's mission to all communities.	Staff complete training in EJ to build knowledge of EJ and EPA's responsibility to all communities.	Staff is better able to interact, understand, and support the Agency's EJ program and responsibility to all communities.	Personnel have EJ knowledge.	EJ program is improved.	Name: Lorena Romero-Cedeño Office: OPRO Telephone: 202-566-0978 email: romero-cedeno.lorena@epa.gov